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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 9437
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 3946
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ISLAMABAD 001100

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TAGS: [IO](#) [PREF](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [PK](#) [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#)
SUBJECT: UNOCHA DISCUSSES IDPS AND HUMANITARIAN
COORDINATION IN PAKISTAN

REF: A. ISLAMABAD 78
[1](#)B. SECSTATE 4353
[1](#)C. USUN NEWYORK 29
[1](#)D. ISLAMABAD 468

Classified By: Anne W. Patterson for reasons 1.4 (b), (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. On May 20, Ambassador met with Rashid Khalikov, the New York Director of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and Manuel Bessler, the Pakistan OCHA Director, to discuss the current internally displaced persons (IDP) situation. With the May 2009 revision of the UN Humanitarian Response Plan to be released next week, Khalikov noted the Government of Pakistan has been difficult about approving the revision out of fear that Pakistan will appear to be a country in conflict. Khalikov requested USG assistance in bringing the IDP crisis to the forefront of an apparently unresponsive international donor community. Khalikov agreed that OCHA would lead the IDP donor community coordination effort, which is becoming increasingly urgent, but asked for assistance from the U.S. Embassy, and he discussed options for bringing a Humanitarian Coordinator to Pakistan, including the possibility of establishing the position of Executive Representative for the Secretary General. End Summary.

GOP DRAGGING FEET ON UN APPEAL

[1](#)2. (C) On May 20, Ambassador met with Rashid Khalikov, the New York Director of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and Manuel Bessler, the Pakistan OCHA Director, to discuss the current crisis with the internally displaced persons (IDPs). To assist with the approximately 1.5 million IDPs, the UN has quickly reconfigured its Humanitarian Response Plan; however, Khalikov noted that the Government of Pakistan (GOP) has been difficult about approving it and allowing the revisions to move forward. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been reluctant to grant full approval of the appeal out of fear of Pakistan appearing to be a country in conflict, like Sri Lanka. The policy planning office at the MFA drove home this point by demanding to have the revision scrubbed of all phrases alluding to "armed groups," "armed conflict," "militant fighting," and "militant hostility" before approval would be granted. Khalikov explained that OCHA partially complied with the request in order to have the revised appeal move forward but that this terminology is also required for issuance of the previously approved appeal and would have to be revisited soon. Ambassador assured Embassy assistance in

speaking with the MFA to have this roadblock removed in light of the crisis at hand.

LACK OF INTERNATIONAL DONORS

13. (C) In a recent meeting, Khalikov said Lieutenant General Nadeem Ahmad, GOP IDP Assistance Coordinator, informed him of the current IDP situation from his standpoint and the growing list of outstanding needs. Nadeem noted that Malakand Division has a high water table and fears that with the rise in heat and the July monsoon season, many of the current UN-led IDP camps will flood, spreading the potential for cholera and malaria outbreaks. Additionally, he plans to find ways to assist those IDPs standing in registration and distribution lines, including tents for shade and water, but he requires international assistance. Nadeem also told Khalikov he believes that when the GOP begins military operations in the southern agencies within the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) that approximately 300,000 additional IDPs will come forth needing assistance. (Note: Nadeem revealed that his sources told him that 3500 IDPs have moved recently from South Waziristan into DI Khan and into the Punjab. Press has reported that 1500 families have moved. End note.)

14. (C) Referencing the Nadeem conversation, Khalikov requested assistance from the USG in putting Pakistan's IDP crisis to the forefront of the international donor community, which he sees as remaining "in denial" to the situation. Noting that the USG has provided the majority of the funding

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for the appeals to date, he requested help in getting the larger donor community to fully understand the magnitude of the IDP situation, pointing to current and future concerns if funding requirements are not met. Ambassador pledged USG support in this endeavor but requested that OCHA take the lead on donor coordination in Pakistan by calling a weekly meeting for donors where details could be fully discussed. (Note and Comment: Khalikov pushed back some on the idea of OCHA leading this effort, noting that it would be more fruitful if the Ambassador called upon like-minded Chiefs of Mission and held a coordination meeting behind closed doors. We will continue to press OCHA and seek out a Nordic embassy to do the "small group." Donor coordination is becoming a serious roadblock to implementation. The UN has to provide this coordination. End note and comment.)

CREATION OF HUMANITARIAN COORDINATOR

15. (C) Understanding the current leadership structure of the Pakistan UN Mission and the sensitivities involved, Ambassador, once again, requested that a Humanitarian Coordinator position be created in Pakistan. (Note. The current Resident Coordinator for the Pakistan UN Mission is dual-hatted as the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) as well, and given his rank and seniority within the UN, Geneva is reluctant to remove his HC status and continues to promise additional staff to assist with the UN humanitarian relief efforts. The additional staff has yet to be provided. End note.) Stressing this point, Ambassador noted that the Embassy could assist with the coordination efforts but that an experienced OCHA member must be named HC to lead. (reftels)

16. (C) Khalikov noted the three options that are currently available: OPTION 1 would be to fully replace the current Turkish Resident Coordinator, an option which Khalikov views as messy and extreme. OPTION 2 would be to appoint one current UN agency representative to serve as the Humanitarian Coordinator while continuing to lead his/her assigned agency. Ambassador pointed out that this option is no better than the current leadership structure in that the humanitarian coordination responsibility is too complex to have someone not solely focused on managing it. OPTION 3 would be to

appoint a Special Executive Representative for the Secretary General, who would lead the humanitarian effort while having a small unit within his office to also assist UN Political Envoy Jean Arnault. This person would be at the Assistant Secretary General level and would have direct access to the federal Cabinet; however, this position would also replace the current Resident Coordinator practically speaking and would require getting past major GOP resistance for its creation due to their fear of looking weak on the global stage.

17. (C) Comment. Ambassador has requested the creation of a Humanitarian Coordinator multiple times with various UN officials and in a number of action requests. However, the sensitivities surrounding the seniority of the current Resident Coordinator have trumped all efforts. In that the humanitarian situation in Pakistan has hit crisis levels, Ambassador urges Washington to consider OPTION 3, assuring Khalikov that we will couch the proposal as a suggestion from the USG and not OCHA. We anticipate, however, that Pakistan's MFA would resist this idea. Pakistan's mission in Geneva seems to be a particular problem, focusing far more on the perceived slights to Pakistan's sovereignty than on the IDPs. Although the Pakistan UN Mission has been a great deal more responsive during this most recent IDP crisis, it continues to remain in reaction mode with a very apparent lack of humanitarian coordination. End Comment.
PATTERSON